9.   The method of claim 2, wherein mapping further comprises:

processing the captured IP packet.

10.   The method of claim 9, wherein the processing comprises:

using header information to map the flow to a flow stored in a local store.

11.   The method of claim 10, wherein the header information includes a flow key.

12.   The method of claim 11, wherein the local store stores for the stored flow, flow state information including a flow key associated with metrics and state information, and wherein processing further comprises:

matching the flow key to the flow key of the stored flow.

13.   The method of claim 12, wherein processing further comprises:

using the flow to update the metrics and the state information of the stored flow.

14.   The method of claim 13, wherein processing further comprises:

providing an accounting record to the accounting application, the accounting record reflecting having updated the metrics and the state information of the stored flow.

15.   The method of claim 11, wherein processing further comprises:

storing flow state information in association with the flow key for the flow in the local store if the header information cannot be used to map the flow to a stored flow.

16.   A method of analyzing a flow for an accounting application, comprising:

mapping network control information to user request information of the flow; and

producing a current accounting record of the flow from the results of the mapping.

17.   The method of claim 16, further comprising:

providing the current accounting record to the accounting application.

18. A computer program product residing on a computer-readable medium for analyzing a flow for an accounting application, comprising instructions to cause a computer to:

map protocol information of a first protocol type to protocol information of a second, independent protocol type for the flow; and

use results of the mapping to provide well-informed accounting information related to the flow to the accounting application.

19. The computer program product of claim 18, wherein the instructions to cause a computer to map protocol information further comprise instructions to cause a computer to:

capture an IP packet from a network segment;

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determine if the captured IP packet includes a message of the first protocol type for providing error reporting, the message having an embedded IP packet that triggered an error event, the embedded IP packet being of the second protocol type and having a flow associated therewith; and

correlate the flow associated with the embedded IP packet to a stored parent flow of a given state to associate the error event with the given state of the stored parent flow.

20. The computer program product of claim 18, wherein the first protocol is the Internet Control Message Protocol.

21. The computer program product of claim 18, wherein the second protocol type is the Transmission Control Protocol.

22. The computer program product of claim 18, wherein the first protocol type is the Internet Control Message Protocol and the second protocol type is the Transmission Control Protocol.

23. A system for flow of network packet data, comprising:

a processor;

a memory storing a computer program product residing on a computer-readable medium for analyzing a flow for an accounting application, comprising instructions to cause a computer to:

map protocol information of a first protocol type to protocol information of a second, independent protocol type for the flow; and

provide accounting information related to the flow and based on the map of the protocol information to the accounting application.

24. The system of claim 23 wherein the instructions to cause a computer to map protocol information further comprise instructions to cause a computer to:

capture an IP packet from a network segment;

determine if the captured IP packet includes a message of the first protocol type for providing error reporting, the message having an embedded IP packet that triggered an error event, the embedded IP packet being of the second protocol type and having a flow associated therewith.

25. The system of claim 24 wherein the instructions to cause a computer to map protocol information further comprise instructions to cause a computer to:

correlate the flow associated with the embedded IP packet to a stored parent flow of a given state to associate the error event with the given state of the stored parent flow.

26. The system of claim 23 wherein the first protocol is the Internet Control Message Protocol.

27. The system of claim 23 wherein the second protocol type is the Transmission Control Protocol.

28. The system of claim 23 wherein the first protocol type is the Internet Control Message Protocol and the second protocol type is the Transmission Control Protocol.

REMARKS

A check in payment for the excess claims fees required is enclosed.